

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 00494 150204Z

65

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2818

INFO AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

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AMCONSUL DOUALA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, EK, NI

SUBJECT: NIGERIA REACTS SHARPLY TO EQUATORIAL GUINEA INCIDENTS

REF: YAOUNDE 127 AND PREVIOUS

1. NIGERIAN PRESS THROUGHOUT COUNTRY CLAMOROUS FOR PAST FEW DAYS OVER INCIDENTS REPORTED REFTEL. FMG ISSUED STATEMENT JANUARY 10 DESCRIBING LAST WEEK'S EVENTS AS "WORST TO DATE IN UNBROKEN CHAIN OF PROVOCATIONS AND HUMILIATIONS METED OUT TO NIGERIANS IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA." STATEMENT RECALLS INCIDENT THREE MONTHS AGO WHEN WIFE AND HOUSEMAID NIGERIAN THIRD SECRETARY MALABO BEATEN UP BY "YOUTH BRIGADE." FMG EXPLICITLY STATED THAT RECRUITMENT NIGERIAN LABORERS HAS BEEN HALTED FOR SOME TIME DUE TO "BARBAROUS TREATMENT" RECEIVED BY WORKERS GOEG AGENTS. FMG CLAIMS ITS REPATRIATION EFFORTS OF PAST SEVERAL MONTHS INTERRUPTED BY "DISRUPTIVE TACTICS OF AGENTS OF GOVERNMENT OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA." AND FMG REGRETS UNRESPONSIVENESS MALABO TO ITS "DIPLOMATIC PRESSURES," PROMISES EVEN MORE SUCH

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PAGE 02 LAGOS 00494 150204Z

AND ENDS, SOMEWHAT OMINOUSLY, WITH NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT RESERVING

ITS POSITION CONCERNING "OTHER MEASURES WHICH MAY BE NECESSARY"
PROTECT EVACUEES.

2. JANUARY 13 PRESS REPORTS APPROXIMATELY TWO THOUSAND EVACUEES
FLOWN INTO PORT HARCOURT JANUARY 10 FOLLOWING STEPPED-UP
FMG AIRLIFT EFFORTS. FMG STATEMENT
OUTLINED ABOVE HAD PROMISED DISPATCH FOUR
NIGERIAN AIR FORCE AIRPLANES (TWO C-130'S
AND TWO F-27'S) IMMEDIATELY. PRESS ALSO REPORTS ARRIVAL AT
CALABAR OF M.V. NNAMDI AZIKIWE WITH 1,500 ABOARD.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH MOST FMG ATTENTION AND ENERGIES PRESENTLY
FOCUSSED ON OAU SUMMIT AND ANGOLA, NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT OBVIOUSLY
NOT TOO PREOCCUPIED TAKE NOTE AND ACT ON WHAT FOR IT
MUST BE AT LEAST EQUALLY IMPORTANT MATTER--THAT OF PROTECTING
ITS NATIONALS WHO BEING MISTREATED ABROAD. WHILE WE
DOUBT FMG WOULD WANT RISK ITS HOPED FOR ROLE AS AFRICAN LEADER
BY BEING SEEN TO BULLY SMALL NEIGHBORING STATE, THIS REGIME
IS ACTION-ORIENTED AND HAS SHOWN IT WILL NOT HESITATE TO ACT
DECISIVELY TO PROTECT ITS PERCEIVED INTERESTS.
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